

NEWS FROM NORTH DAKOTA'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

**Senator Kent
CONRAD**

**Senator Byron
DORGAN**

**Congressman Earl
POMEROY**

For Release: Tuesday, April 4, 2000

Contact: Dana McCallum (Dorgan) (202) 224-9255

Laurie Boeder (Conrad) (202) 224-2043

Karen Krieg (Pomeroy) (202) 225-2611

JAMESTOWN RESEARCH CENTER RECEIVES \$600K TO FURTHER BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN GREAT PLAINS

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – U.S. Senators Byron Dorgan and Kent Conrad and Congressman Earl Pomeroy announced Tuesday that the Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center in Jamestown has received \$600,000 to hire additional staff and continue important grassland studies. The delegation included the funding in the FY2000 Interior Appropriations bill.

The funding, which was approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee of which Dorgan is a member, will allow the center to hire eight new full time/seasonal employees, including a permanent plant ecologist. In addition, the money will maintain studies in six areas that were in danger of being cut:

- One study focuses on the status and distribution of nesting grassland birds in tallgrass prairies, which are the most endangered type of grasslands. They are inhabited by birds that will only breed in those grasslands which are located in eastern North Dakota and northern Minnesota.
- The Bird Conservation Area Concept is being evaluated in the northern tallgrass prairie as a means to maintain and increase bird populations.
- The effects of small water developments, such as dams created for agricultural purposes in the ranching community, are being evaluated on wetlands and uplands in western North Dakota.
- The effects of exotic plants on reproduction of native flowering plants are being studied because of the risk they pose to the entire surrounding ecosystem.
- The effects of nest-destroying brown-headed cowbirds on songbirds in the Great Plains are being researched to help stop the decrease of the songbird population.

The Jamestown Research Center is the focal point for the Department of Interior grassland investigations, particularly in the effort to find ways to integrate grassland management concerns with ongoing agricultural interests. The additional funding for the center was strongly supported by the delegation. "It is important to learn how we can better use our land in North Dakota, while protecting our natural resources," the delegation said Tuesday in a joint statement.

The delegation said that grassland studies will provide needed information to help various land managers choose the most efficient way to get the highest return from their land while safeguarding natural resources.

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Research Center Contact: Ronald Kirby, Center Director @ 701-253-5515